

The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

No. 74, Vol. vii.]

BELFAST, FEBRUARY 1st, 1887.

[For Gratuitous Circulation

THE Rev. J. C. Street begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following subscriptions in aid of the gratuitous publication of the *Chronicle and Index* :—

Mrs. Woolcott Browne, London,	£0	2	6
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Further subscriptions are invited, and will be gladly acknowledged.

ON New Year's Eve the Annual Festival of the young people in connection with the Sunday Schools of the Second Congregation was held in the school-rooms and lecture-hall. There was a large and bright gathering of the young people and their friends, and the proceedings were of the most enlivening character. From first to last there was a full tide of enjoyment, and there was no flagging in the merriment from beginning to end. Teachers and friends vied with each other in efforts to please the children. The rooms were gaily decorated, the provisions were abundant and elegant, and the annual gifts were highly appreciated by the scholars. The Superintendent, Mr. Bulmer, had his pleasant work well in hand, and the Pastor exerted himself to make everything cheerful and successful. The teachers wrought splendidly, and everything passed off with great *eclat*. The Anniversary was an unusually bright one.

THE first Monthly Service for the children of Rosemary Street Sunday School took place on Sunday, January 2nd, when there was a large assembly of scholars and teachers. Mr. Bulmer conducted the devotional service, and the Rev. J. C. Street delivered an address on "Gardens and their Cultivation." The subject was turned to practical account, and fairly rivetted the attention of the scholars.

ON Sunday, January 16th, instead of the usual service at Hopeton Street, there was a distribution of premiums for attendance and good conduct during the year. There was a very large attendance. Hymns were sung, and an address delivered by the Rev. J. C. Street, who also distributed the premiums to the children of both schools. The proceedings occupied upwards of one hour, but seemed to be of the greatest interest to all who were gathered together.

WE hear, with much pleasure, that the class for teaching sewing to the girls at Hopeton Street is being carried on by Miss May, with the assistance of other ladies, with the greatest success. The class now numbers upwards of 40 scholars, and they are being taught to make and mend their own garments, and seem very glad to avail themselves of the tuition given by the ladies who attend from week to week. This is a work of practical usefulness which cannot help but do a large amount of good, and we heartily congratulate Miss May and her colleagues on their success.

THE following were the subjects of discourses by the Rev. J. C. Street during the month of January :—

January 2nd—*Morning*—Hospital Sunday—

A Present Duty. *Evening*—Come over and help us.

January 9th—*Morning*—Out of the Depths. *Evening*—Pioneers.

January 16th—*Morning*—Groping Blindly. *Evening*—Bridge Makers.

January 23rd—*Morning*—Through Tribulation. *Evening*—Image Breakers.

January 30th—*Morning*—The Heart at Rest. *Evening*—Builders.

FUNDS greatly needed by the MORAL REFORM UNION, to enlarge its work, which is both educational and preventive, and is established in the interests of pure family life. Treasurer—Leinster Place, Porchester Terrace, London, W.

F. HOPKINSON SMITH, in one of his charming sketches in "Well-worn Roads," tells how in Venice his gondolier several times enticed him to a crooked little street "back of the Rialto," under the pretense of finding various coveted specimens of bric-à-brac. But there was never any "coin-covered gondola staff" to be found, nor rare old engravings, nor odd cabinet work. At last, the artist discovered that this was the street of the gondolier's home; and these vain searches were but excuses to get extra glimpses of his little, crippled *Giuletta*. And Mr. Smith concludes: "Patient, loyal, gentle old gondolier! With me, you will forever be a part of sunny skies, old palaces, and the silver shimmer of the Lido, the bright sails of red and gold, the cool of dim, incense-laden churches, and crooked canals under quaint bridges. . . . But I love best to remember you with that pale-faced child in your arms."

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," said Jesus, in his manhood. But it was as an infant in Bethlehem that he began to draw the world unto him. And what Jesus was in his own home, and to the wider world, every little child is, or should be, among those who love it. "A little child shall lead them," cried the old prophet, referring to the unnatural grouping of animals that he saw in his vision. That might be literally true; for it is a familiar fact that many creatures will submit to be fondled by little children, though they

might resent similiar treatment from older persons. But not alone among vicious animals is the little child a leader, but among fiercer men and in rude haunts. We recall a photograph of an uncivilized Indian mother, with her baby on her lap and a little child at her knee. Some one, who could see divinity in our common humanity, had written beneath it "An Apache Holy Family." And Mary, the mother of Jesus, could hardly have showed greater affection and pride than beamed from the face of this wild squaw, whose little child had led her into the kingdom of love.

So, in the homes of the very poor and of the working people, even more perhaps than in those who are counted rich, as the world counts riches, it is the little child that appeals most strongly for protection and care. It is for the little ones that the parents struggle with want. It is that they shall be sheltered and fed and clothed and schooled that burdens are borne and self-sacrifice endured. The older children may learn to shift for themselves, the hard facts of life may have lessened the courtesy between husband and wife; but the little one is the magnet that holds them true to one another and to it. The dancing eyes, the merry crow, the outstretched arms that wait the laboring man on his return from his day's work are his riches and his joy, leading him from temptation and revealing the better nature within him.

Christmas reminds us of the little lad of Bethlehem, who has led a mighty host through all the ages since. But not only in religion do we feel this softening, purifying influence of the little child; but, throughout literature, the characters that are sure to lead captive the hearts of readers are the "Little Nells," the "Tiny Tims," the "Wee Laddies." They have their mission, and fulfill it. Their power of attraction is their purity, their innocence, their trust. No wonder that "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Willing subjects of these little kings and queens are we all,—Venetian gondoliers, Apache squaws, and every-day people of the every-day world. May they at this Christmas-tide lead us into their kingdom of "peace and good-will!"

UNTO THE HILLS.

BY M. L. D.

"Unto the hills whence cometh strength."

Unto the hills whence cometh strength

My weary feet have ta'en their way.

Oh, give me of your strength, ye hills,

Ye lofty mountains, huge and gray!

Tell me whence comes this wondrous calm,

Whence comes this soothing, restful peace,

That, when my sky is all o'ercast,

I come to you, and troubles cease?

Tell me whence comes this sense of power

To meet and conquer all life's ill,

This hope for better things, this faith

To calmly trust a higher Will?

Ye answer not; but, as I gaze,

Stronger and stronger grows your spell.

I've found your strength,—I know not how,—

Your peace,—but how I cannot tell.

THE meetings of the Mutual Improvement Society during the month of January were most interesting and enjoyable. The following subjects occupied the attention of the members:—

January 10th—Lecture: "A Trip through the Lower Animal Kingdom" (with Magic Lantern Illustrations). By Mr. W. Gray, M.R.I.A.

January 17th—Paper: "Jests and Jesters," Mr. Henry Riddell, M.E.

January 24th—Paper: "Peace with Honor." By Mr. S. Millin.

January 31st—Paper: "Hindoo Theology." By Mr. J. Harper.

The Lecture of Mr. Gray, as well as the Papers by the other gentlemen, were listened to with profound attention, and were highly appreciated by the thoughtful and numerous audiences present to hear them. The Society is in very vigorous activity.

RELIGION is the greatest impelling power towards perfection.

Were it possible for us for a moment to be so placed as to behold the universal mind of

mankind, what an awful and also sublime spectacle would be manifest to us! We should see thoughts springing out of ambush, while other ideas were within their intrenchments, motives contending in furious strife, plans and counter-plans, and all proceeding like the operations of a vast campaign. Amid the strife of interests and the clash of opinions we should behold a company of minds influenced by a passion for real religion. Most of these we should see pressing on through dangers and sorrows and bearing losses with noble patience, faith, hope, and charity. "Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing, onward through life they go"—"seeking a better country, even a heavenly."

We should also note that such persons vividly realise that religion is the one great impulsive force towards spiritual perfection. This then is a sacred fact which we shall do well to consider.

Religion within the soul has a wonderful rousing effect. It makes the idle man shake off his slothfulness, and the fool his folly. It makes the drunkard forsake his cups, and the avaricious to forget his thirst for gold. In a word, it helps to *transform* its subjects as well as impel them to enter upon a higher life. You and I, if we have experienced this most blessed change, know that we have verily been renewed in the spirit of our minds. We then entered on the high road toward perfection.

And why did we this? We found it to be our duty and delight, and the very source of all true personal development.

Alas! to the majority of Christians the promise of future reward is still made a powerful incentive to spiritual endeavours.

Eternal happiness is held out as a kind of bait to attract and convert sinners and to lure the godly to nobler efforts. Such persons do not see that *goodness* is the supreme law of the Universe, and that the moral forces of this world make for righteousness.

Do any ask what is the highest good that man can have or get? Know then that "the supreme good of an intelligent and moral being is the perfection of its nature." (*Channing*).

This is what God wants of us, and as a Holy

Being He can require no less. Nothing that does not involve or promote our perfectibility is worth being called good.

Now, Religion, which is the love of God and man, raises our character and refines it. It moreover helps to quicken the intellect.

Subjects, the grandest that can employ our thoughts, are welcomed by the devout. And so the mind is brought to look upon the highest truths—God, the soul, and a future state are themes that it loves to dwell upon, and while musing thereon, the fire of devotion burns with new and brighter flame.

The united testimony of the rocks is that the earliest forms of life were simple in their construction, but, as the years rolled on, fish, reptiles, and then mammalia appeared—a wonderful ascending scale, from the simple toward the complex, till at last Man appeared as God's crowning creative act on this planet. What a sublime idea does this afford when we apply it to man's higher nature, and consider that nature as immortal, unfolding magnificent powers and ascending—often slowly and painfully, yet ever ascending—towards perfection. So striving to live, that new hopes and joys give grace and glory to his nature, he thus shows—

"The more noble instinct that aspires."

Here, then, we have the key to Paul's words of quenchless aspiration, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect; but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus." "One thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind and stretching forward to the things that are before, I press toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

What, then, is the end and aim of the truly religious? Perfection. It is the divine far-off ideal, and though it be never actually reached by any, yet every sacred effort, every task patiently achieved, every temptation resisted, every burden well and truly borne, every new triumph of faith and love brings the soul nearer to that perfection which is God's and His for evermore.

E. R. HODGES.

OUTLINES OF LECTURES TO YOUNG MEN.

BY JAMES C. STREET.

WHAT TEMPTATIONS SHALL I MEET?

No. 2.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.—In my Lecture on "What ought I to live for?" I pointed out how important were the trusts which one generation confided to another, and consequently how grave were the calls upon the young men of to-day to live nobly. I shewed that in God's universe "nothing walks with aimless feet," but that everything subserves some Divine purpose. Hence, I argued, there must be some purpose in the creation of mankind, and concluded that every man ought to set himself to the fulfilment of that purpose. I pointed out that some young men were "drifting;" others were aiming at some poor and unworthy mark; and that multitudes were failing to realize a noble standard. I entered fully upon the theme what every young man should live for—pointing out that you were "sons of God" and "heirs of immortality." I shewed the grandeur of your nature, your bodies, your minds, your souls; and from all this I argued the loftiness of your destiny, and urged you to "lay the foundations of your life in bodily purity," "to build up the superstructure of large mental culture," and to "glorify the temple of God by the holiness which leads to immortality." But I said you would have to face great difficulties, and to meet great temptations. You ask—

WHAT TEMPTATIONS SHALL I MEET?

There is an intimate connection between the body, the mind, and the spirit, and whatever influences one will more or less influence the others; but it will be convenient to consider the temptations as they come with greatest force upon (1st) The Physical, (2nd) The Mental, and (3rd) The Spiritual parts of your Nature.

(1ST.) THE PHYSICAL.

Let me make two preliminary remarks.

1st. It is my intention to speak very plainly.

2nd. I shall deal with human nature honestly, and as it is, and shall not libel it by using the false phrases about total depravity.

A young man first leaving school or college for business or for a profession, or quitting his father's fire-side to go out into the world, is like a ship whose keel for the first time cuts its way into unknown waters. The waves sparkle, the world smiles, but there are storms, rocks, currents, and dangers. In the way of the young man are many pitfalls.

(A.) THE DRINKING CUSTOMS.

The words of our great Poet ought to ring in the minds of our young men:—

"Oh, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains; that we should, with joy, pleasure, revel, and applause, transform ourselves to beasts."

The allurements of strong drink, presented as they are in every fascinating guise, are an insidious foe to your well-being. If you conform to the customs of society in this matter, you are in danger of excess and ruin. You may only awake to your peril when the opportunity of thorough safety is out of your reach, and you are drifting on to the rocks of destruction. The only safety is in abstinence.

"Make temperance thy companion, so shall health sit on thy brow."

Win your battle at the outset. Abstain from the very appearance of evil.

(B.) UNCHASTITY.

Only with lightest touch can I bring this theme before you—and yet how important it is! You will find yourselves face to face with a peril that will try your honour to the uttermost. This temptation will rise "as whirlwinds sweep the sea." You must meet it, and conquer it, or you will fail to reach the height of lofty manhood. Reverence for the purity and sanctity of womanhood will ensure a noble manhood. Guard carefully every avenue of passion and lust, and keep such watch and ward over your desires that your moral cleanliness shall gleam forth from every look and deed of your life. If you are not careful the very affection which should glorify your life may be perverted into the dreadful snare which shall land you in the darkness of moral misery.

(C.) ATHLETICISM.

It seems strange to you, I dare say, that

I should speak of racing, steeple-chasing, boating, and all similar pursuits, as offering temptations to you; but while physical pursuits are useful and necessary, the excess to which they are carried, the companionships and associations with which they are too often allied, lead frequently to the most deadly results. If you are not mindful they will seduce you from the work of life, they will lower your aim, and they will dwarf your manhood.

Guard against drink, against unchastity, and against the snares of undue physical pleasures.

(2ND.) THE MENTAL.

In this region you will find yourselves face to face with many perils.

(a) You will meet the plea that lying is needful in business. This is often gravely said by men of the world to young men. It is a false and delusive statement. Business may be conducted on thoroughly honourable and truthful principles. If it should ever appear to you that it cannot, it would be better for you to starve.

"The man of pure and simple heart
Through life disdains a double part;
He never needs the screen of lies
His inward bosom to disguise."

(b) You will perhaps feel the feverish haste to grow rich. Do not be drawn into this wild witches' maelstrom. "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent."—Prov. xxxviii. 20. Watch yourselves that you be not drawn into any form of gambling—all trickery and dodging is dishonest. Work honourably and faithfully, but keep out of all lust of excess.

(c) There may be the desire to curry favour with those above you. The very wish to give pleasure is liable to lead you into serious danger. It may make you a sycophant, a spy, a lyckspittle. You will be tempted to fawn, and flatter, and deceive. But you will do this at the peril of your future life.

(d) You may feel the wish to give up mental culture. Away from home, amid gay companions, with luring calls to every kind of pleasure, you will be tested as to whether you have the makings of a man in you. The spirit-bar will try to draw you from the library; the casino will set up a rivalry with the study;

the ball-room will try to out-bid the lecture-room. You will be tempted to sink into the level of commonplace insignificance, and to lay aside the hope of rising into mental honour and distinction.

These will be some of your mental perils.

(3RD) THE SPIRITUAL.

Many of you have been brought up in religious homes; now you are away from them, you will be tempted to give up religion. You will be laughed at if you persist in trying to live up to your professions. On the one side you will be urged to give up all cant; on the other you will be advised to keep up your connection with some church, because it is respectable to do so, but you need not trouble yourself to be over religious. But greater perils will come. Perhaps you will begin to think about religion, and as you do so, to find you do not agree with the doctrines of the Church in which you were brought up. You will be advised to keep your opinions to yourself, to palter with words in a double sense, to outwardly profess one thing while inwardly you believe another. Now this is a great temptation. Many give way to it. But they do so at the expense of honesty, of purity, of manhood. He who would be great must be true.

Many say it is not manly to be religious. Religion is namby-pambyism. They scoff at its professors. They say religion is all very well for women and children, but men ought to know better. These people will try to lead you into revolt against it. Who are these? What are they? Did a great, good, or noble man ever talk thus? Compare their words with those of the Poet's—

“Take thou the Poet's counsel to thy heart:

Question thy spirit, make its wisdom thine—

Shut out the world, pride, pomp and every part,

As these retire, we gaze on worlds divine.

Then spiritual loveliness appears—

God's nature glows through every form we see,

For mind's the prophecy of other spheres,

And is itself its own futurity.

Turn to thy soul, eternity is there;

The key of the invisible behold:

Spirit thou art—of spirit-worlds the heir—

All other secrets can thy sense unfold.”

There is a fine passage in Parker on “Temptation of the Devil.”

“Jesus had his temptation in the wilderness, says the New Testament story. No doubt it was so. But he had it in the city also, in house and shop, and everywhere else. When the devil finds us in the wilderness, and single-handed meets us, the devil alone, and we alone, he is not much of a devil, he is not hard to put to rout. But the great temptation of the devil is when he is backed by interest or fashion, and meets us not alone, but in the crowd. There is small cause to fear the devil when we meet him alone, but the devil well attended by respectable gentlemen, that is the devil who is alarming. The devil who lies in ambush

under the counter, who skulks behind a bale of cotton, or rings money in your ear, or rustles gay garments,—that is the dangerous devil, and fortunate is he who sees him fall as lightning from heaven. Nay, that is the kind that goeth not out but by manly prayer, and manly work.”

Spencer says—“How many perils do enfold the righteous man, to make him daily fall.”

On all sides of your natures, young men, the physical, the mental, and the spiritual, you are beset with temptations. Snares, gins, and pitfalls attend you every step. You may well pray to be delivered from them—but your prayer must be embodied in action. Rouse yourselves! Respect your own nature! Meet your foes courageously! Be not cowards in the fight!

“A thousand witnesses around
Hold thee in full survey.”

“From Cain down to the vulgar spy of the present day, all the betrayers of their fellows, all the men who have chosen the path of evil, have heard, and hear in the depths of their secret soul, a voice of blame, disquiet, and reproof, which says unto them: ‘Wherefore did you forsake the right path?’” (*Mazzini.*)

But the true men who have subdued temptation and won the crown of glory, shine like stars in the diadem of God. Be you among the number.

THE Treasurer of the Unitarian Society begs to acknowledge receipt of the following subscriptions for the year 1886:—

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Church of Second Congregation.

SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY.

By Rev. J. C. STREET.

PROGRAMME.

FEBRUARY 6th—

Morning—The Lamp of God.

The Monthly Offertory will be made for Congregational purposes.

Evening—Atheism.

FEBRUARY 13th—

Morning—The Law of Love.

Evening—Agnosticism.

FEBRUARY 20th—

Morning—The Nature of Rest.

Evening—Theism.

FEBRUARY 27th—

Morning—The Life of Religion.

Evening—Monotheism.

Service at 11-30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

The Offertory in support of worship is taken after every Service.

Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association.

FIFTEENTH SESSION, 1887.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the following

PROGRAMME FOR FEBRUARY, 1887.

- Feb. 7—Lecture: "A New Method of acquiring French Pronunciation," Rev. G. W. Bannister.
 " 14—Paper: "The First Unitarian Bishop of Hungary," Professor G. Boros.
 " 21—Paper: "Good Grammar," Mr. H. J. Aston, M.A.
 " 28—Lecture: "A Short Study of William Blake," Rev. F. Thomas.

THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

ARE
The intellectual and moral advancement of its members, and the furtherance of acquaintance and fellowship among them.

The Meetings are held on MONDAY EVENINGS at Eight o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

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By DR. E. BLACKWELL.

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